

**BEFORE THE ENVIRONMENT COURT
AT CHRISTCHURCH**

Topic Number 2010-308-003

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

A N D

IN THE MATTER of appeals relating to Proposed Plan Change
22 – Styx Centre being Topic no. 2010-308-
003

BETWEEN **KIWI PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LIMITED
AND ANOR**

Appellant under ENV2010-CHC-010

A N D **WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Appellant under ENV2010-CHC-013

A N D **CANTERBURY REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Appellant under ENV2010-CHC-017

A N D **CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL**

Respondent in respect of all appeals

AND **CALCO DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**

The party requesting the plan change

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JAMES TALBOT BAINES
ON BEHALF OF CALCO DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Bio-data and experience

- 1.1.1 My name is James Talbot Baines. I am a founding director of Taylor Baines & Associates and a specialist in Social Impact Assessment (SIA).
- 1.1.2 I have undertaken training courses in SIA and have been a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) for the past fifteen years and the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment for the past seventeen years. Between 2000 and 2006, I was Chairperson of the IAIA's Social Impact Assessment Section, during which time the Section developed the most recent set of principles for the practice of Social Impact Assessment (SIA). During this time I have also been engaged both in New Zealand and in South East Asia to provide professional training in Social Impact Assessment and to develop Social Impact Assessment implementation programmes in Malaysia on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme.
- 1.1.3 In total, I have had twenty-one years experience in applied social research and SIA work. This has included participation and leadership in several multi-year social research programmes under contract to the Foundation for Research Science and Technology, as well as a wide variety of consultancy contracts for both public and private sector clients.
- 1.1.4 Within New Zealand, my professional experience covers the application of social impact assessment in numerous parts of the country and across a wide range of proposals, including central and regional policy statements, local government boundary changes, urban development plans, air quality plans, waste management facilities, prisons, mall and supermarket developments, port developments, casinos, marine farms and energy infrastructure developments.
- 1.1.5 Of particular relevance to this hearing, I have in the past few years appeared as an SIA expert at hearings for a number of urban planning matters, including presenting the social evidence on behalf of the Christchurch City Council at the Environment Court hearing on Variation 86 (2007) and the social evidence on behalf of Landco (the applicant) at the Environment Court hearing on the Long Bay Structure Plan in

North Shore City (2007). In 2009 I prepared evidence on behalf of the Auckland Councils in relation to the Environment Court appeals on Proposed Change 6 (PC6) to the Auckland RPS, although the matter was ultimately settled out of Court several days before the hearing was to have taken place. I was also involved as a social impacts expert in several cases related to Proposed Change 1 (PC1 and its variations) to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement which has subsequently been approved by a panel of commissioners.

1.1.6 In addition to my training and practical experience as a social impact assessment specialist, I hold a Bachelors Degree with Honours in Chemical Engineering from the University of Canterbury and a Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching from Wellington Teachers Training College.

1.1.7 I have in the past been called upon as an expert witness in a variety of settings including resource consent hearings, a Board of Inquiry, appeals to the Environment Court, and hearings before the Local Government Commission and the Casino Control Authority.

1.1.8 I have prepared my evidence in compliance with the Code of Conduct of Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Consolidated Practice Note (2006). I confirm that my evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state a reliance on the assessment of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my analysis or conclusions I express.

1.2 Brief for this Social Assessment and Statement of Evidence

1.2.1 I was responsible for the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) of Proposed plan Change 22 (PC22) commissioned by Calco Developments Ltd, a copy of which is included in the Bundle of Documents.

1.2.2 This statement of evidence is based on the findings of that Social Impact Assessment work.

1.2.3 The scope of the SIA required me to -

- to assess the social arguments for establishing a new town centre on the assessment site, and to assess the degree of consistency with the CCC City Plan and other relevant current policies and plans;

- to assess the likely social effects on existing centres of establishing a new town centre on the assessment site; and

- to carry out a needs assessment for community and social services and related infrastructure for the residential community primarily served by the proposed new town centre.

I have used the phrase “new town centre”. However, as I will elaborate later (at paragraph 1.3.5), because the geographic location addressed within PC22 is immediately adjacent to the existing Supa Centa, PC22 could be described as providing for the transformation of an existing shopping centre into a more integrated, mixed-use town centre.

1.2.4 I have subsequently reviewed the findings of the SIA work completed in June 2009 in light of developments in the institutional setting which have occurred since then. I refer to this update at paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.8.

1.3 The proposal being assessed

1.3.1 As I understand it, the zoning change described in PC22 would not in itself grant consents to the applicant to proceed with a town centre development. The zoning change, if approved, would enable such an application for consents to be made subsequently.

1.3.2 Details of PC22 have been addressed in the AEE documentation and in the evidence of Ms Alison Thompson.

1.3.3 The salient points of PC22 are -
- a request to re-zone the assessment site from Rural 3 to Business 2 (District

Centre)

- the establishment of development control parameters with which subsequent detailed design must comply, and
- the specification of additional assessment criteria which will also apply to any subsequent design.

1.3.4 In the absence of detail about the town centre design and occupancy at the proposed Styx Centre, my assessment has drawn on the only genuine comparison case that I am aware of in New Zealand, that of the Botany Town Centre which was developed by AMP, the organisation which will become the owner and manager if and when the Styx Town Centre is developed. Botany Town Centre is a functional town centre which was planned from the start. Reference is made to this comparison case because it is helpful in indicating what is possible when a town centre is developed as an integrated project, rather than a piece-meal series of separate developments over time, as so often occurs.

1.3.5 I make the observation that the geographic location addressed within PC22 is immediately adjacent to the existing Supa Centa, which is already zoned for business activities. Established a decade ago, the Supa Centa was planned as a shopping centre for large-format retailing outlets. Before long, demand for other services resulted in the establishment (inter alia) of several restaurants and a child-care facility. However, it cannot be said that the Supa Centa in any way provided for the range of amenities expected of a modern, integrated town centre. Nevertheless, the Supa Centa does constitute a major locus of established shopping activity in the northern sector of the City. If PC22 proceeds adjacent to the Supa Centa, it is my understanding that the two sites will ultimately be developed as a coherent entity, with due attention to aspects such as built form, public transport connections, open space, pedestrian amenity and mixed uses - aspects requiring attention in a modern town centre. In his evidence (at paragraph 1.2.5), Mr Tansley describes the Supa Centa site as the *"large format (lfr) precinct of the wider town centre"*. Hence my reference at paragraph 1.2.3 to providing for the transformation of an existing shopping centre into a more integrated, mixed-use town centre.

1.3.6 I note also that the applicant has agreed several changes of detail concerning

building setback, building envelope height and indicative location of a public transport interchange in reaching agreements on several points of appeal. These changes have been addressed in Ms Thompson's evidence and indicated in an amended Special Provision Plan.

2 ASSESSMENT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction and rationale

- 2.1.1 Social Impact Assessment seeks to examine the full range of potential social effects - that is to say, both positive and negative - and associated issues. The assessment is aimed at identifying effects and issues in advance and recommending appropriate mitigation measures.
- 2.1.2 In this instance, we are assessing an enabling Plan Change, not a specific resource consent application. Therefore the focus of assessment has been on strategic issues, bearing in mind that some issues will be more appropriately assessed in greater detail at the consent application stage which will focus on a more detailed design.
- 2.1.3 In my opinion, the social, environmental and institutional context within which this assessment has been made must of necessity encompass elements of a vision of the future of this part of the City extending out some thirty years or more. It is not sufficient to use the present circumstances and the current issues which exist in the northern part of the City as the basis for assessing social effects. Rather, this is the baseline from which a long-term projected scenario has been developed.
- 2.1.4 The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) sets out a statutory framework which aims to direct the assessment to consider whether the proposed Scheme would be consistent with the sustainable management of resources in a way or at a rate that enables people and communities to provide for their social well being (as provided for in section 2 and section 5 of the Act).

2.2 Conceptual framework for assessment

- 2.2.1 Carrying out a social impact assessment within this statutory framework requires

attention to a conceptual framework for thinking about social well being, and what are the factors which might contribute to people's experience of social well being through a planned town centre on the subject site. Such a conceptual framework, which has been adopted in a range of other SIAs and social research contexts in New Zealand in recent years¹ comes from social indicators work in the OECD² and closely parallels the framework adopted by the Ministry of Social Development³. The OECD study identified key areas of social life which shape well being. These were presented in Appendix 1 of the SIA report.

2.2.2 Elements likely to be of most relevance to this strategic social assessment include consideration of:

- the state of physical and mental health - in this case influenced by consideration of access to primary health services within a town centre as well as consideration of the way urban form and planning support the development of healthy, active lifestyles;

- the quality of housing, shelter, neighbourhood and living place - in this case influenced by the role of a town centre in supporting the future development of higher-density residential living within walkable distances from civic and commercial amenities;

- opportunities for income, employment and the quality of working life - in this case influenced by the role of a town centre as a focus for substantial levels of employment in a variety of occupations;

¹e.g. Assessment of the effects of Project Aqua on local communities and development of community mitigation proposals, for Kurow Aqua Liaison Committee, 2003; SIAs carried out on several wind farm proposals between 2005 and 2007; social analyses carried out for assessing the social implications of commercial retail strategy development in Christchurch City between 2003 and 2005, social assessment carried out on a Structure Plan proposal in North Shore City in 2007.

²OECD, 1998. Living Conditions in OECD Countries: a compendium of social indicators. OECD Social Policy Studies No.5. Paris.

³Ministry of Social Development, 2003. The Social Report 2003: Indicators of social well being in New Zealand. Wellington.

- opportunities for leisure and recreation⁴, time to enjoy them, and access to quality outdoors/open space - in this case influenced by the provision of retail space with high amenity values as well as specific leisure-related venues within a town centre and the relationship between the proposed town centre and the Styx River green corridor;
- access to public facilities, transport, communications, and access to goods and services - in this case influenced by access to shops and transport connections within or adjacent to the proposed town centre;
- the quality of the physical environment, a clean environment with aesthetic appeal - in this case influenced by overall design parameters for the proposed town centre, and the provision of public open spaces within the town centre;
- influences on family life, social attachment, social contact, interaction and support - in this case influenced by opportunities for social interaction within a town centre both in commercial spaces such as cafes, public open spaces and in leisure venues, as well as access to support services that might be located within or nearby;
- influences on participation in community and society, including participation in organised groups and social activities - in this case influenced by the provision of community facilities which facilitate group activities, as well as the role of the town centre in providing a sense of identity at the sectoral level (i.e. for the whole northern sector of the City);
- influences on personal safety, public safety, autonomy or freedom from too much risk - in this case influenced by provision for safe access between the town centre and its neighbouring residential areas, as well as by design attributes and by security arrangements within the town centre.

⁴Indeed, NZ research indicates that shopping is ranked highly as a recreation activity by New Zealanders. A survey conducted by the Hillary Commission found that shopping centres were the most popular leisure facilities used by respondents during the previous four weeks (56%). Source: Wilson N, Russell D, and Paulin J, 1990. *Life in New Zealand: Summary Report*, prepared for the Hillary Commission for Recreation & Sport, Wellington. p.75.

- 2.2.3 In conducting this SIA, consideration was given to whether or not the proposed Plan Change, which would provide for the development of an integrated town centre on the assessment site, is likely to have consequential effects on any of these areas of social life, and for which communities of interest this is most likely to be the case.
- 2.2.4 It will be apparent from the foregoing outline of a conceptual framework that the application of Social Impact Assessment is trans-disciplinary in character. It necessarily draws upon aspects of analysis from a range of other experts, a matter to which I refer by way of examples in paragraph 2.4.1 below.

2.3 Consultation coverage

- 2.3.1 As practised by Taylor Baines & Associates, social impact assessment is participatory in nature, involving an active process of consultation with researchers taking the initiative to engage stakeholders.
- 2.3.2 In addition to the consultation activities undertaken by the Calco Developments Ltd, Haines Planning and consultants in other disciplines prior to the commissioners' hearing in 2009, the Taylor Baines assessment team was engaged in key informant interviews and data gathering in the existing communities of Belfast, Northwood and Redwood, as well as with institutional service providers in the City.
- 2.3.3 These consultation activities took place between February and April 2009 and covered public agencies, individual service providers, residents associations and existing community groups in Belfast, Northwood and Redwood. A complete list of interviewees was included as Appendix 2 in the SIA Report.
- 2.3.4 In preparation for this hearing, I contacted Council staff and contractors involved in preparing the Belfast Area Plan, libraries planning and community facilities planning in order to update myself on progress which may have occurred since August 2009. I comment on this further at paragraphs 3.2.3 and 3.2.7 below.

2.4 Sources of information and key assumptions

- 2.4.1 Social impact assessment typically makes use of a range of research methods as

ways of accessing primary data (i.e. data collected by the researchers themselves) and secondary data (i.e. data collected by other parties). In this SIA, research methods and sources of information included:

- document review (e.g. the applicant's proposal documents, assessments of that proposal carried out by other consultants (for example retail, traffic and landscape assessments), Council Plan and Strategy documents, summaries of written submissions on PC22, and relevant local research reports - for example, the research commissioned by the Belfast Community Network. These documents are listed in Appendix 3: References in the SIA Report)
- primary data collection through face-to-face interviews with key informants, as outlined in Section 2.3 above, through direct observations by the assessment team, and by attendance at community workshops and meetings⁵;
- comparison case experience through key informant interviews regarding community experience of an integrated centre at Botany Town Centre;
- secondary data access (e.g. Statistics NZ census demographic data and travel-to-work data; CCC planning data, etc.);
- discussion and exchange of information with other experts assessing the effects of PC22.

3 THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT AND COMMUNITY - THE FUTURE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 The institutional context at the time of the Plan Change hearing in 2009

- 3.1.1 The institutional context involves the mix of public policies, plans and strategies which have a bearing on the future development of the northern sector of the City, and the extent to which communities there are enabled to provide for their social well

⁵Community workshops organised by the applicant at Belfast in December 2007 and July 2008; meetings with Residents Association Representatives in March and April 2009.

being in the future. They include:

- the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS);
- changes to the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) (approved but now under appeal);
- the adopted Variation 86 which focussed on a centres-based approach to urban development, particularly as it relates to the planning of centres; and
- various CCC planning processes including the Belfast Area Plan, the Libraries 2025 Facilities Plan, the 2025 Community Facilities Plan, and the Styx River Vision and Styx Project.

3.1.2 In the remainder of Section 3.1 of this statement (paragraphs 3.1.3 to 3.1.23), I summarise the institutional context as it was at the time of the original Plan Change hearing in 2009. Then, in Section 3.2 of this statement I provide an update on this institutional context as I understand it to be at the present time

The Urban Development Strategy:

3.1.3 The UDS identifies the following community expectations of particular relevance to social outcomes:

- more concentrated settlement patterns and well-defined centres;
- affordable travel through more choice of transport options, particularly walking, cycling and public transport;
- public passenger transport integrated with commercial and residential development;
- enhanced community character, diversity and facilities, and
- enhanced 'sense of place', heritage, open space networks, and urban and site design.

3.1.4 Corresponding with the above expectations and option evaluations for the northern sector of the City, the Indicative UDS Settlement Plan (reproduced as Appendix 4a in the SIA Report) shows an Activity Centre and several greenfield residential growth areas, as well as 98 hectares of greenfield business-zoned land to the north-east of Belfast.

The Regional Policy Statement:

- 3.1.5 Proposed Change 1 (PC1) to the RPS was designed to give effect to the UDS, which is itself already the adopted policy of the Regional Council and territorial authorities. At that hearing, I gave the social analysis evidence on behalf of several submitters⁶ with interests in the northern sector of the City, although I did not present evidence on behalf of Calco Ltd.
- 3.1.6 To give effect to the UDS, PC1 proposed specific Urban Limits, promoted intensification of residential development, reinforced the centres-based approach to the future structure of urban development, and provided for the progressive release (sequencing) of greenfields land for development within the Urban Limits.
- 3.1.7 Under discussion of Policy 5: Key Activity Centres and Commercial Activities, the Officer Report for PC1 recommended Belfast as one of the designated Key Activity Centres, and the ECan map showed the 'Belfast' Key Activity Centre located at the intersection of Radcliffe Road and Main North Road, with a footnote identifying the submission by Calco Developments Limited. The ECan map also indicated a greenfield business/industrial area northeast of Belfast. Although not shown on the map, the route for the proposed northern arterial highway runs adjacent to the eastern urban limit (i.e. east of CN4) while the route for the proposed western by-pass runs north of the CN1 greenfield residential area. These two road infrastructure developments will therefore define the future boundary of the contiguous northern residential area of the City.
- 3.1.8 Policy 5 in PC1 states that *"Territorial authorities shall sustainably manage the development of the Key Activity Centre to:*
- *provide for facilities and services necessary to support the planned community, and*
 - *encourage economic and business activity and interaction, and*
 - *broaden the mix of uses appropriate to the centre, including medium and/or high density residential provision within and adjoining the Key Activity Centre, and*
 - *support the development of the principal public transport and cycling networks and the ability to change transport modes, and*
 - *encourage pedestrian and cycling access to and within these centres."*

⁶Christchurch International Airport Ltd; Mills Road Group/Hills Road Group.

Variation 86 to the District Plan:

- 3.1.9 Variation 86 was a Plan Variation advanced by the Christchurch City Council and heard in the Environment Court in 2007. At that hearing, I gave the social analysis evidence on behalf of the City Council. The Variation has subsequently been adopted by the Council.
- 3.1.10 From a social perspective, the main purpose of Variation 86 was to manage future retail distribution across the City and the development of commercial/shopping centres. This was because of the potential for distributional effects to be disenabling of communities, if not appropriately managed.
- 3.1.11 My understanding of the intention of Variation 86 was that the Variation was not to prohibit the establishment of new centres but rather to ensure that the development of new integrated centres as new focal points for the community occurred through a Plan process, not as a result of a series of incremental, ad hoc consent processes.
- 3.1.12 At the end of the Variation 86 hearing, the Environment Court made some general comments in its final decision to the effect that the Council should show leadership in investigating the need for new district centres, and be pro-active in ensuring there is sufficient provision to meet future demands for commercial and retail space. In the context of PC22 and the UDS time horizon, this is in my opinion a particularly pertinent issue. It is also important, to the achievement of a town centre as distinct from a shopping centre, that the Council works constructively with the private-sector promoters of the town centre in articulating and promoting the public interests, such as the public realm, public transport and community facilities.
- 3.1.13 From the information available to me, it appears that no party was questioning the need or appropriateness of a centre in the Belfast area, nor indeed that the Radcliffe Road intersection is the most sensible location for such a centre. The central issue appeared to be a debate about the scale of such a centre, an issue I will return to later in my evidence.

Various City Council planning processes:

- 3.1.14 Several other planning initiatives of the City Council, relevant to this northern sector were in progress or nearing completion⁷ at the time of the 2009 Plan Change hearing. These were the Belfast Area Plan, the Libraries 2025 Facilities Plan and the 2025 Community Facilities Plan. Each of these planning initiatives is discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.4 of the SIA Report.
- 3.1.15 Examination of the information on the Belfast Area Plan (BAP) released publicly at the time of the commissioner hearing indicated that the area covered by the BAP is somewhat more restrictive than the community of interest covered in the other Council planning initiatives. The planning area essentially adopts the Styx River as its southern boundary, although the map shown on the most recent Update at that time indicated that the relatively new residential development of Redwood Springs on the southern side of the River is included in the BAP. From a social and community perspective, this is something of an anomaly, since access into Redwood Springs is gained exclusively from the south, through the suburban area of Redwood, which is not itself included in the BAP area.
- 3.1.16 Both the Libraries 2025 Facilities Plan and the 2025 Community Facilities Plan expressly indicate communities of interest with a radius of 2-2.5 km, an area somewhat more extensive than that covered by the BAP, particularly in terms of its reach in a southerly direction. In my opinion, the wider community of interest reflected in the Libraries and Community Facilities Plan is more appropriate for the consideration of issues associated with the development of the northern sector of the City.
- 3.1.17 I believe it is helpful to keep in mind a notion of spatial hierarchy as it applies to the notion of 'community'. People experience 'community' at different levels, and derive social well being from each level of community. This is amply demonstrated by the empirical evidence gathered during the social assessment and reported in Section 3.3.3 of the SIA Report. For example, interviews for this assessment with 24 service providers or community-based organisations operating from premises in Belfast and

⁷The Belfast Area Plan is due to be adopted formally by the Council towards the end of June 2010. It will therefore have been adopted by the time this Court hearing takes place.

Redwood identified that:

- in 13 cases, the social catchment encompasses the northern sector of Christchurch - i.e. Belfast, Redwood and adjacent suburban residential areas;
- in 7 cases, the social catchment covers an even broader area - across the City and reaching out across the Waimakariri River; and
- in 4 cases, the social catchments are specifically localised - schools with enrolment schemes and early childhood services catering mainly to their immediate neighbourhood.

3.1.18 The aim of establishing a Key Activity Centre in the northern part of Christchurch is not to submerge or sublimate interests at the local or neighbourhood level. Rather it is to provide access to amenities that normally would not be provided at a very local level.

3.1.19 Notwithstanding the limitations of its spatial scope, the BAP nevertheless provides a localised elaboration of the principles of the UDS. At the time of the commissioner hearing, the website⁸ pointed to a range of elements which could be interpreted as describing an expected future scenario for the BAP area, and these were summarised in Section 3.2.4 of the SIA Report.

3.1.20 In respect of future commercial development, the draft BAP at that time showed the PC22 assessment site as the location for significant commercial developments, which were then described as incorporating predominantly 1-2 level retail, commercial and leisure activities, centred around the existing Supa Centa commercial infrastructure; maximised connections with the existing Supa Centa and developing residential areas; a network of internal streets and open spaces to encourage internal walking and gathering spaces; landscape planting to provide 'green fingers' linking to an enlarged Styx River corridor; and landscaping and screening to mitigate any bulky buildings where visible from public streets.

3.1.21 In respect of community facilities the draft BAP supported access to a range of

⁸<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/AreaPlans/Belfast/WhatHasBeenDone/>

community services and facilities, and expressed a desire to ensure equitable provision of community facilities in North West Christchurch, and Belfast in particular, and ensure facility provision matches population growth.

3.1.22 Two of the five vision statements in the Styx River Vision document should be noted in relation to PC22. Vision 2 refers to the 'Source to Sea' concept, which would enable people to experience and learn about the river system, through the development of a continuous walkway along its length, and notes recent Council purchases of property aimed at facilitating this vision. Vision 5 focuses on the need to foster "Partnerships" and notes that this will be achieved through raising the quality of relationships and moving forward together.

3.1.23 The development of the Styx Town Centre has the potential to be an important focal point in the realisation of the 'Source to Sea' concept. The SIA identified the need for a constructive partnership to be formed between the developers and future owners of the Styx Town Centre and those responsible for promoting the Styx River Vision.

3.2 Updating the institutional context to June 2010

3.2.1 Several decisions - of potential relevance to PC22 - have been taken by various public bodies since the PC22 hearing took place and the PC22 decision was announced. The commissioners' decision on PC1 to the RPS has been released, although I understand it is now subject to appeals to the Environment Court. The Christchurch City Council completed its formal decision making on the Belfast Area Plan during the final week in June 2010. The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) has announced its intention to progress several stretches of Christchurch motorway and State Highway as Roads of National Significance (RONS).

3.2.2 The decision on PC1 to the RPS is relevant on several counts. Firstly, the decisions version of PC1 confirms⁹ the status of a Key Activity Centre (KAC) in the general location of the proposed Styx Town Centre site. This is further reinforced by decisions on the amount of prospective greenfields residential land in the northern sector of the City. The decisions remove certain prospective greenfields residential

⁹Confirmed under Policy 5 and by a yellow star notation on Map 1 (Annexures 2 and 4)

areas¹⁰ from within the urban limits and include several additional prospective greenfields residential areas¹¹ within the urban limits, having the net effect of increasing the future potential residential population of the northern sector of the City and providing “a greater substance to the population proposed to support the proposed Belfast KAC and community facilities both existing and intended in this northern area.”¹²

3.2.3 When adopting the Belfast Area Plan in June 2010, the Council noted that “Belfast is identified in both the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, Plan Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement and the Christchurch City Plan, as a major urban growth area. Over the next thirty five years the area is expected to accommodate over 2,900 new houses, and approximately 110 hectares of new industrial development. The sequencing of land development will be broadly as follows (in accordance with Decisions to Plan Change 1 of the Regional Policy Statement):

- Applefields (Belfast RMA section 293) to be mostly developed in the short term (to 2020).
- Styx District Centre at Radcliffe Road to be developed in the short term (to 2020).
- Central and north eastern Belfast Industrial Areas developed and redeveloped in the short term (to 2020).
- Residential development to the east of the Main North Rail corridor with 30 hectares released in the short term (to 2020), with the residual 50 hectares released in the medium /long term (2021 – 2041).¹³

In essence, the Council has updated its Belfast Area Plan to reflect its commissioners’ decision on PC22, with the final scale of the proposed centre being subject to the decision of this Court.

3.2.4 I have reviewed the summary of public submissions to the final version of the Draft Belfast Area Plan, and make the following observations:

¹⁰The CN2 residential growth area has been deleted and the CN3 residential growth area been reduced in scale as a result of confirming the 50 dBA airport noise contour.

¹¹Additional residential land at Hills Road/Mills Road (CN5 and CN6).

¹²PC1 Decision Report, p.183, para.679

¹³Background paper for the Regulatory and Planning Committee Agenda on 3 June, 2010, para.23.

- the topic of PC22 attracted little attention¹⁴;
- the social issues of interest to submitters and with most relevance to PC22 include:
 - the provision of community facilities¹⁵;
 - support for improved Public Transport services through Belfast¹⁶;
 - support for provision of cycling and walking infrastructure¹⁷; and
 - the integration of Old and New Belfast¹⁸

3.2.5 Community-level submissions came from three local organisations in Belfast¹⁹. However, none of the Residents Associations appeared to make submissions.

3.2.6 During 2009, central government announced that it is bringing forward funding of several Christchurch motorway and State Highway segments as part of its RONS programme. Included in this programme is the Northern Arterial now expected to open in or shortly after 2016, as noted by Mr Carr in his evidence at paragraph 54.

3.2.7 From these institutional developments I draw the following conclusions in respect of the context for PC22:

- both the RPS and Belfast Area Plan have endorsed the concept of a Key Activity Centre, at the scale of a District centre and located in the vicinity of the intersection of Radcliffe Road and Main North Road;
- the central feature of PC22 is thus incorporated consistently within the policy and planning hierarchy as it relates to the northern sector of the City;
- PC1 reinforces the intention to encourage residential development of the northern sector between now and 2041 by increasing the extent of residential development enabled within the urban limits in the northern sector of the City;

Downloaded from the CCC website on 9 June 2010.

¹⁴Four submissions in total: from Calco Developments Ltd, AMP, Kiwi Property Management Ltd and one private individual.

¹⁵14 submissions in total - 13 in support and one in opposition (because of potential cost to ratepayers).

¹⁶6 submissions in total.

¹⁷11 submissions in total - 10 in support and one in opposition (because of potential cost to ratepayers).

¹⁸5 submissions in total.

¹⁹Belfast Community Trust, Belfast Community Network and Belfast Bowling Club.

- confirmation of the timing of the Northern Arterial ensures the avoidance of any traffic congestion issues on Main North Road that might have been associated with development of the proposed Styx Town Centre at Radcliffe Road;

- the situation regarding the planning for community facilities is essentially unchanged, although the long-term level of demand is likely to be greater than previously anticipated due to the expanded residential catchment permitted by PC1.

3.2.8 Notwithstanding these institutional developments at the regional and city level, the Waimakariri District Council requests that PC22 be declined in its entirety.

3.3 The future social environment

Historical and future population growth and land-use change

3.3.1 Until the new millenium, there was nothing exceptional about recent population growth in the northern sector of the City. Between 1996 and 2001, the population of Belfast grew by 4.8% and that of Redwood/Styx did not change at all. In terms of residential patterns, the northern boundary of the City was marked clearly by the transition from urban to rural which occurred at the Styx River. Belfast was an entirely distinct community, surrounded by rural land.

3.3.2 Only a decade later, that situation has changed markedly and the changes are evident throughout the northern sector of the City in terms of converting rural land to residential areas as well as commercial development. These changes are described in Section 3.3.1 of the SIA Report.

3.3.3 Redwood is no longer on the rural fringe; the rural-urban interface has already moved north of Belfast. Given the UDS planning scenario described earlier and more recently endorsed by the Belfast Area Plan, within the next 10-15 years, the rural appearance will have altered substantially in the greenfield areas designated CN1, CN3, CN4, CN5 and CN6. Residential development will have occurred on both sides of the Styx River and north of Johns Road. The Northern Arterial is expected to be

open by 2016 and it is also likely that the Western Bypass will have been constructed. Most of what is currently rural land within the BAP area will have been converted to other uses.

Contrasting demographics and social needs

3.3.4 As a result of these cumulative changes, the residential community of the northern sector will comprise a mix of local neighbourhoods, some based on the long-established areas such as what are now Belfast and Redwood, and others based around new greenfield developments, such as Styx Mill, Northwood and Redwood Springs. Based on an analysis of 2006 census data for these residential communities, it is likely that these neighbourhoods will have some contrasting demographic characteristics, which are described in Section 3.3.2 of the SIA Report and quantified in Appendix 10 of that report. The latter reveals some demographic divergences between older and newer residential communities. The newer residential communities emerging already and expected under the UDS are likely to be higher-income households, and people with distinctly different occupational, educational and employment achievements and aspirations.

3.3.5 Because of their different demographic characteristics, and because older and newer neighbourhoods will have different endowments of community facilities, there will be different social needs in each case. For example, in some cases demand for older people's services will be high, while in others the social needs for youth or young families will require more attention.

Changing notions of communities of interest

3.3.6 As well as the expansion of residential development northward across the traditional town-country boundary, generally associated with the Styx River, another important social change has begun to occur. The traditional community distinctions are already becoming blurred. Indeed, the concept of 'community' is itself multi-faceted. Individuals frequently belong to more than one 'community of interest'. Even a defined residential area or suburb is only one aspect of 'community' in contemporary urban living. Individuals have associations with others not only by virtue of their

place of residence, but also by virtue of work associations, regular access to services, or shared interests in recreational, cultural, professional or service activities. Yet other social interactions are associated with kinship relations, which are not necessarily geographically focussed.

3.3.7 Thus there are other social catchments already emerging which involve this northern sector of the City, and which I have described already in paragraph 3.1.16. These relate to shared recreational activities (sports, leisure), shared cultural activities (churches), distribution of work places, locations to access services (schools, pre-school, primary health, ...) and so on. Data presented in Appendices 11 and 12 of the SIA Report demonstrate that at the present time the northern sector of the City is a nett exporter of workers to other parts of the City. A growing residential population in the northern sector is likely to create greater demands for work locally than can presently be supplied. It is also likely to result in residents of the northern sector increasingly experiencing 'community' at several levels - from neighbourhood, to suburban cluster, to the City as a whole.

3.3.8 While the Styx River may indeed become the 'green gap' between the City and what used to be the rural town of Belfast, it is also likely to become one of the important focal points of the northern sector - an attraction in its own right, and also a corridor for the movement of wildlife and people. Indeed, the vision for the Styx River incorporates notions of educational, recreational and leisure activities at various points along the River, from its source to the sea. Thus, the longer-term scenario for the Styx River will include 'social' activities, nearby residential development, pedestrian/cycle linkages along the River and potential multiple crossing points along the way. It is evident already that the realisation of the Styx River vision will depend on the combined efforts of Council, adjoining landowners and community volunteers.

The status of community facilities in the northern sector

3.3.9 Older residential communities (Belfast, Redwood) have better-established community networks and bases for service provision. Facilities there are generally a legacy from previous eras - in a mix of government, city, private sector and local community ownership. However, more than one-third of the organisations interviewed in Belfast

and Redwood indicated that the premises they operate from are constrained in their capacity.

- 3.3.10 Newer residential communities (Styx Mill, Northwood) tend to have less well-established community networks and relatively few community facilities. These have not often been thought about and provided for when development occurred.
- 3.3.11 It is useful to reflect on what is meant by the phrase “community facilities”. In one sense, community facilities are those which are ‘owned by the community’. These include buildings owned by the City Council on behalf of the local community - halls, community cottages, service centres, scout dens, volunteer libraries, sometimes the land on which sports clubs have their buildings, although the buildings themselves may be owned by the clubs, as in the case of the Belfast Rugby Club and Belfast Bowling Club. Thus, the City Council has a traditional role in maintaining a stock of community-owned buildings spread around the City. However, as the map in Appendix 13 of the SIA Report shows, the northern sector of the City has relatively few Council-owned community centres and halls. Churches too have traditionally owned buildings in most older residential areas of the City, and made halls available for various uses by community groups. In Belfast and Redwood, such facilities are owned by the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches, the Salvation Army and the Christchurch North Elim Church. Kindergartens and playcentres have sometimes operated from premises owned by a community agency. School facilities - primary and secondary schools - are also publicly owned on behalf of their communities and are frequently used out of school hours and at weekends by a variety of community groups.
- 3.3.12 Community ownership is one possible dimension of community facilities. However, increasingly, a range of community services and activities are run out of privately-owned but rented premises. For example, Council Service Centres sometimes operate from rented space, while the most recent community library in Christchurch, at Upper Riccarton, was built on land owned by the Ministry of Education at Riccarton High School. Leisure and recreational activities - for example the Redwood Citizens Club, the Belfast-Redwood Probus Club and the Friendly Club operate by hiring rooms to meet in. The Belfast Community Network leases a building from a church.

- 3.3.13 A range of medical and health-related services are also considered important local facilities. Even though they are often operated on a private commercial basis from privately-owned premises, they are largely, if not exclusively funded by central government to provide services. These include medical centres, pharmacies, dentists and physiotherapists, as well as Early Childhood Education services.
- 3.3.14 In summary, access to community facilities for various groups in a community can be provided through a mix of Council ownership of premises, charitable or commercial leasing arrangements sometimes facilitated by Council, or direct government funding of essential social services.
- 3.3.15 The Community and Recreation Needs Analysis and Community Facility Plan for Belfast made a number of relevant findings about the state of community facilities in the northern sector of the City. While the existing population is well serviced for health, social and education services, an increasing population will create more demands for such services. The options in primary school services were seen as increasingly limited. There is a need for accessible recreational opportunities for young people. However, existing community facilities available for use by others are either affiliated to churches or have liquor licences, which make them unsuitable for some groups. Even now, there is little capacity for additional user groups. Other needs identified were a designated community meeting space, a hub to help integrate new communities into Belfast, and a community centre. Other 'gaps' were noted in easily accessible banking facilities, postal services and public toilets.
- 3.3.16 A series of three workshops were held during the course of consultation for PC22. These workshops established local interest in the inclusion of some community facilities within the proposed Town Centre, including medical services and possibly a library; a shared-use, multi-purpose facility for hire by community groups and community meeting rooms for hire at nominal rents, a Council Service Centre, a base for a Community Constable, a CIB/Information Centre, access to banks/ATMs, and a safe outdoor play area. Submissions to the Belfast Area Plan identified a similar range of community facilities amongst the social needs for the future communities of this area.

3.3.17 Interviews with government agencies were conducted to establish what strategic provision of services or facilities is anticipated for the northern sector of the City over the coming decades. Details of these discussions are provided at pp.16-18 of the SIA Report. I will highlight here some of the conclusions most relevant when considering the potential role of a town centre.

3.3.18 Ministry of Education advice regarding the future establishment of primary schools in the northern sector was that it is more likely to be two rather than three, but that a new secondary school in the northern sector is less certain. The changing concept of primary schools - seeking to encourage multiple community uses and changes in teaching/learning environments - means that new primary schools are likely to be embedded within residential communities with more entry/exit connections than historically. Consequently, new primary schools can be expected to contribute to the distributed, localised community facilities in each suburb. Ministry of Education submissions on the Belfast Area Plan reinforce these earlier observations²⁰.

3.3.19 In terms of early childhood education, discussions with the Ministry's ECE Network Coordinator concluded that:

- private providers are expected to predominate in the northern sector of the City;
- ECE services will be offered in a variety of settings;
- ECE providers are increasingly establishing within residential neighbourhoods where the local demand originates, so not all providers necessarily look to commercial centres to locate ECE services; but
- in a well-planned and successful Town Centre the primary need will be for the centre to be self-catering in enabling the provision of ECE services for people who work there;
- if an ECE service is located in a centre, particularly for all-day occupation, its physical environment is important - this needs attention to accessibility for users,

²⁰Extracts from the Ministry's submissions: "Primary schooling: ... Spatially it would make sense to consider establishing a second primary school .. to the west of Belfast. The Ministry will continue discussions with the Council around the need for another primary school and will work with the Council to find a suitable location. Secondary schooling: Current demographics show that a secondary school is not required, however, if the numbers change, provision may be required in the longer term."

access for children to open space and green space, safety for the children, environmental quality such as car exhaust fumes, etc.; and

- while there is a place for ECE services within a modern centre, there are many other opportunities for such services to locate.

3.3.20 Primary health providers cover a broad range of health services - GP/medical practices, nursing services, pharmacies, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, rehabilitation activities, diagnostic labs, community mental health services, family planning services.

3.3.21 These are typically small businesses which are largely publicly funded; therefore they are effectively community services/facilities. Public funding comes from a variety of sources - from the CDHB, direct from the Ministry of Health, and from ACC. The last of these already has its main South Island offices located in the Supa Centa.

3.3.22 Primary health services will increasingly be based around GP teams (the navigators of professional health care), located in the community and supported by other private and NGO providers (the supporting cast of specialist services). It is important to remember that demand for health services is not uniform across residents; 65+ years and under-5s are particularly high users. Occupational therapy services will become increasingly important as part of the 'aging in place' policy, as will health-related exercise and activity programmes such as Tai Chi classes. This places an increasing importance on access to community-based facilities for these activities.

3.3.23 Discussions with the CDHB Planning & Funding Manager concluded that:

- since the future of primary health services and facilities in the City is based around a decentralised model, there is likely to be an important role for a new town centre;
- primary health providers are effectively essential community services and facilities to which easy local access is important; therefore they will need to be an important part of the mix of any new Town Centre tenanted;
- co-location of primary health services and other social services is an advantage for providers and clients; and
- there will be plenty of future demand for more primary health providers in the

northern sector as the population grows; therefore there should be no concern about displacing existing providers.

3.3.24 As I have already pointed out in paragraph 3.3.11, Councils have had traditional responsibilities in relation to the provision of certain community facilities, most notably libraries and community meeting spaces. My discussions with the relevant facilities managers at the Christchurch City Council lead me to make the following observations:

- while the proposed Styx Town Centre offers a good prospect for a library development, it is not the only good prospect in the northern sector; Belfast Primary School also offers good prospects for a new library location;
- these two possible locations offer different mixes of advantages/disadvantages;
- the kind of library facility that might locate in the Town Centre or at the school would not necessarily be the same; for example, a library located in the Town Centre would not be likely to include its own café since there would be plenty of cafes nearby anyway;
- it is possible that in future, 'satellite' library services might evolve - i.e. much smaller pick-up/drop-off locations established away from a library but adding convenience for some users;
- large areas of greenfield residential development in the northern sector are not well provided with community facilities; and
- any proposed Town Centre may have a role in partnering with the Council to accommodate suburban-level community facilities, rather than neighbourhood facilities.

3.3.25 From these observations, I conclude that the proposed town centre development has the potential for a major role in providing a range of accessible community facilities to serve the interests of all the residential communities in the northern sector of the City. Furthermore, if PC22 is approved, the Christchurch City Council will have a strong incentive to become involved in negotiations with the developer, aimed at optimising such opportunities, both for the facilities that it might itself be directly interested in providing and managing, as well as to influence tenant selection of private providers, in the interests of the northern sector communities. The latter interest has already been indicated by the Canterbury District Health Board funding manager.

4 PRINCIPAL FINDINGS OF THE STRATEGIC SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Relevant time-frame for assessment:

- 4.1 Before summarising the principal findings of the social assessment, I note it important to interpret the PC22 proposal in the context of the future pattern of development envisaged for the northern sector of Christchurch City and not in the context of the present extent of development.
- 4.2 The planning processes referred to earlier in my evidence all have time frames of at least 10-30 years. I am informed by the applicant that the town centre proposed under PC22 would not be completed in full until 2017 at the earliest, and the UDS and Belfast Area Plan have both adopted a forward planning horizon of 2041.
- 4.3 This is a time-frame during which people with various interests in the future of the northern sector of the City could reasonably expect the following developments to occur:
- the anticipated Key Activity Centre;
 - the surrounding residential developments in areas CN1, CN3, CN4, CN5 and CN6 including higher density development²¹ near the Key Activity Centre and green open spaces;
 - the Northern Arterial and Western Bypass Roads; as well as
 - considerable progress towards achieving the long-term vision for the Styx River.

Principal findings:

- 4.4 The strategic social impact assessment has found that PC22:

²¹ Spatial analysis of residential dwelling densities around commercial centres in Christchurch, based on the 2006 census data, shows that where L3 (higher density) designations have been in place, the resulting dwelling densities (average 10.1 dwellings/ha) have been 42% higher than for centres surrounded by L1 residential zoning (average 7.1 dwellings/ha). The corresponding figure for residential dwelling density around the four existing, district-level commercial centres (Northlands-Papanui, Shirley-The Palms, Eastgate-Linwood and Riccarton) averaged 10.0 dwellings/ha in 2006.

- is consistent with the relevant policies and plans of the City and the region, insofar as these relate to social outcomes;
 - is consistent in approach with that advocated by the recently adopted Variation 86 to the City Plan;
 - significantly improves accessibility to a wide range of commercial and retail services for residents of the northern sector of the City;
 - offers the potential for significant contributions to community facilities in the northern sector, complementing those in long-established residential communities and providing additional capacity to cater for recently established residential communities which are without such facilities at present;
 - offers potential synergy with the Styx River Vision, similar to the relationship of the Avon River to the City Centre, so long as adequate provision is made to safeguard essential ecological values and amenity values where the two zones intersect, and based on constructive collaboration between the Council and the developer;
 - will generate no lasting and significant adverse distributional effects for existing centres;
 - supports the development of a significant community focal point in the northern sector of the City, catering to people and residential communities within 2km of the site;
 - offers the prospects of substantial increase in local employment opportunities, increasing the ratio of local jobs to local workers available from 0.44 in 2006 to 0.52²² in 2017, thereby reducing the average trip distance from home to work and the proportion of northern sector residents who go elsewhere in the City to work;
 - offers good connectivity prospects to adjacent residential communities on all sides;
- and

- will encourage residential intensification in the vicinity through the combined amenity attractions of the proposed Styx Town Centre and the Styx River.

5 THE ISSUE OF CENTRE SIZE

5.1 As I noted at paragraph 3.1.13, I understand that a critical issue yet to be resolved in this application is that of the appropriate size of the centre that is proposed under PC22.

5.2 In terms of the social analysis, I will comment on several aspects of this issue:

- the relevance of considering retail distributional effects and their consequential social effects;
- the link between centre size and social amenity benefits; and
- the implications for future growth and enabling other stakeholders to plan with greater certainty.

Potential retail distributional effects:

5.3 As noted in the SIA Report Section 5.2.2, the issue is largely an expression of concern about the potential for distributional effects on existing centres when the Styx Town Centre is finally completed sometime in 201 or thereafter.

5.4 As I argued at the Variation 86 Hearings²³, distributional effects on retail activity can and have had significant adverse effects on the social well being of some people served by the centres where significant retail losses occur. More specifically, in certain circumstances, as when the only supermarket/anchor store in an existing centre closes as a consequence, the establishment of substantial out-of-centre retailing activities can be said to pose significant risks to a range of social amenity values in that existing centre - reduction in choice, reduction in accessibility and adverse effects on the social environment. Importantly, these social amenity effects

²² Bearing in mind Mr Tansley's future employment estimates, at paragraph 6.0.3.

²³ Both the Commissioner hearing and the Environment Court hearing.

are usually inequitably distributed.

- 5.5 This however depends on demonstrating that significant distributional effects are likely to occur, which is a matter on which Mr Tansley has provided expert evidence. From my reading of his evidence, Mr Tansley is confident and unequivocal that such effects will not occur. In his conclusions (his paragraph 1.2.2) he states that *“there is no foreseeable possibility that trade competition effects arising from development of the Styx Centre, as consented by the Council, could result in significant, sustained loss of function in any centre.”* He comments further (at paragraph 1.2.5) that *“the proposal now before the Court represents a conservatively based short term initiative. It leaves unmet short term potentials that to a lesser or greater extent may be taken up by other centres, as well as reasonably foreseeable needs beyond 2020, in regard to which the Styx Centre could be a contributor.”* and (at paragraph 2.2.7(3)) that *“No centre would be denied - by virtue of the Styx Centre trade competition effects - the opportunity to participate in future retail growth in the northern part of the Study Area.”* Therefore, the circumstances (described in paragraph 5.4 above) are not a relevant consideration in this case.

Centre size and social amenity benefits

- 5.6 In 2003, I participated in publicly-funded research²⁴ which analysed how social amenity is gained through a commercial centre's social role, providing convenient locations for people to access a variety of recreational and socialising venues, and to access personal and household services. The results suggested that wherever retail development occurs, there is scope and a tendency for diversification to occur, irrespective of the scale of the shopping centre. However, there also appears to be a strong correlation between the scale of the shopping centre and its capacity to provide a significant social role. A number of other attributes were also evident from the research findings, including :

²⁴ Baines, J.T. et al., 2003. *Retail facilities in New Zealand - a comparative analysis of functional and social roles*. Working Paper FS31 prepared under Public Good Science Fund Contract TBA X0203, Host Communities: Siting and Effects of Facilities. Taylor Baines & Associates, Christchurch. June 2003

- larger centres tended to have associated with them more community facilities than smaller centres;
- the longer-established and larger scale shopping centres exhibited more diverse community uses;
- in the larger centres the community facilities tend to be more interspersed among the other commercial activities whereas in the smaller centres the community facilities are clustered nearby in the host community, reflecting to some extent the constraints of space in smaller centres.

5.7 In a planned town centre, such as that proposed under PC22, these advantages of scale are further enhanced by the opportunity for major stakeholders to be involved pro-actively in negotiating the scale and mix of community facilities and services at the design and tenancing stages. This leads onto my final point.

Future growth and planning to provide certainty:

5.8 My understanding is that the RPS and UDS are meant to be about strategic planning, rather than incrementalism; strategic planning which provides the opportunity to take into account environmental, social and economic considerations at the same time.

5.9 For many actors (property developers, services providers, individual property owners, infrastructure developers, ...) the degree of certainty that comes with longer-term strategic planning is enabling, whereas incrementalism is not.

5.10 Upfront certainty of the range of social amenities that can be expected with a new town centre rather than an uncertain future possibility is much more likely to incentivise high-density residential development nearby the Key Activity Centre, which I understand to be an important thrust of the UDS and the BAP, as well as PC1 to the RPS.

5.11 At the individual household level, when deciding where to buy or build a home, people want to be certain of compensating amenities if they are going to give up private space.

- 5.12 Similarly, planning for community facilities and investment in community/public infrastructure needs a long time frame. Community organisations and the City Council tend to be more resource constrained for investment in facilities than the private sector, and community facilities are there for a long time. Thus community-level investments also benefit from the certainty that they are being made in locations that will be appropriate over the long term.
- 5.13 In my opinion, the issue is not whether the Styx Town Centre fulfils the role of a Key Activity Centre now, but whether it will fulfil that role from 2017 onwards - and therefore what is necessary for it to do so. If its role is accepted as that of a Key Activity Centre, then it needs to be designed to provide a focus and stimulus for the northern sector as it develops and consolidates in the intended manner, not as an after-thought once residential development has occurred. It is far easier to make adequate long-term provision now, than to retrofit additional capacities afterwards, when reverse sensitivity issues tend to be more acute.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 I conclude, on the basis of this assessment, that PC22 offers prospects of many social well being benefits. Granting approval for PC22 to proceed would significantly improve planning certainties for many other parties interested in the future development of the northern sector. Overall, I conclude that PC22 would be strongly enabling for the people and communities in the future northern sector of the City.

James Talbot BAINES

9 July 2010